1: Schram M-5 (1911-1922) 1954 AE9 Monguor AE9

V. FAMILY LIFE

THE EXTENDED FAMILY

596 The general principles of the Monguor family system have already been given above in Chapter III, and need here be recapitulated only very briefly. Until 1911–1922, when these notes were made, the Monguor family was a patrilineal, extended, patrilocal family. The extended family was under the authority of the grandfather, or of the great-grandfather if he survived. No family of which I had any knowledge exceeded four generations. The whole extended family lives in dwellings grouped around a common courtyard. The property and wealth are collectively owned by the whole group, but with authority over the property unequally concentrated in the senior generation. This manner of life is graphically described by the Monguors in expressions (used also by the Chinese and possibly borrowed from the Chinese) as "our family has only one chimney," or "we all eat out of one cooking-cauldron." While these sayings may be borrowed from the Chinese, the underlying principle, that of the hearth and the fire-spirit of the hearth, belongs independently to the nomad tradition from which the Monguors are descended.

Conversely, the break-up of an extended family is visibly symbolized when one of the nuclear families composing the extended family sets up its own kitchen, hearth, and chimney and begins to cook its own food separately. This means that it is parting from the extended family to which it belongs and founding a new extended family. The son who thus sets up separately becomes independent of the orders of the senior whom he formerly acknowledged as head of his family; he is beginning to work for himself and to retain any money that comes into his hands, instead of turning it over to the head of the family. When a son begins to act in this independent manner, the neighbors gossip, the family itself is uneasy, and it is recognized that the old family is breaking up.

596 •587 It should not be assumed that polygamy is a regular characteristic of the extended family. Polygamy is very decidedly an economic question. On the one hand, polygamy does not go well with residence in a common courtyard, because it gives rise to quarrels among wives, and on the other hand there are few Monguors who are economically able to afford a household with more than one wife. If one of the sons living in the common courtyard should venture to ask the head of the family to provide him with a concubine (perhaps because his wife is barren) all the other daughters-in-law are jealous and their husbands share with them because they feel that the cost of the concubine means that the favored brother is being given more than his share of the family's capital. If the tormenting of the other daughters-in-law should drive the concubine to despair, she might commit suicide; and a suicide always means the complete ruin of the family.

[762]

[P. 816]

596 Theoretically, it might be argued that a son who had left the extended family to live separately would be free
•587 to take a concubine. In practice, he is rarely able to do so because the commonest reason for leaving the extended family is that it has become too poor to support all its members. The son who is starting life separately is, therefore, usually starting as a man too poor to afford a concubine.

587 Polygamy is, however, not frowned on in the case of a small family consisting of husband and wife, economically well off but without children. In order to prevent the line from dying out, thus breaking the continuity in the ancestor-cult, it is quite proper to take a concubine, even if the couple has already adopted a child. Polygamy is also not unusual in a small family in which there are children, if the family are well off; in such cases, if the wife does not object, her husband takes a concubine and the concubine helps her in her housework.

In one case in my experience, in a rich family consisting of husband, wife, and one son, who was already married, the mother objected to her husband taking a concubine, but did not mind arranging for a second wife for her son; the arrangement was one that provided an extra worker in the family.

The Monguors make a distinction between polygamy, as described above, and the levirate. In a family in which there are several sons, all of them married and having children, if one of the sons dies, the widow becomes the second wife of one of his brothers (usually a younger brother). The distinction between the levirate and polygamy is clear. Polygamy requires the expenditure of family funds for the acquisition of a second wife or concubine. In the levirate, the bride-price has already been paid: if the widow should leave the family in order to marry an outsider of her choice, she would be a loss to the family and it is proper, therefore, to make an arrangement that keeps her in the family. The levirate is, however, only practiced when brothers are still living together in the extended family, and when the widow consents.

THE FAMILY CHIEF

572 The position of chief or head of the family normally passes by primogeniture to the eldest son of the first
611 wife of the previous head of the family. If at this moment the extended family should break up, instead of continuing to live together, the eldest son is privileged to receive a larger share of the fields and cattle forming the common property, and his own eldest son shares this privilege, also receiving a cow or horse, or a field. This rule of succession and inheritance is followed by both nobles and commoners.

592 In every family, rich or poor, noble or commoner, the head of the family is the religious chief, the family administrator, and the family representative in dealing with higher authorities outside the family. He repre-

1: Schram M-5 (1911-1922) 1954 AE9 Monguor AE9

581 a well-to-do family needing more work done in the household arranges for a son who is still a child to
565 marry a grown-up girl. It is not surprising that such marriages are frequently followed by the elopement of the poor bride with a lover of her own choosing. The
583 case corresponding to that of the bride brought into the family for the sake of her working power is that of the
587 poor young man who goes to work in a family not his own, perhaps for years, in order to earn a bride from that family. To work for a bride in this manner is to lose a certain amount of status socially, since it requires that the young man live in a household where all the male members of the family have status and rights, and he alone is an outsider. A widow usually becomes the second wife of one of her husband's brothers if the family is still living united, but not if the brothers have already divided their inheritance and are living separately. More and more, in the decline of the old Monguor society, it has become usual for the widow to make her own choice of a second husband. If, instead of going to one of her husband's brothers, she marries a man of her own choice, it is customary for her new husband to bring her home secretly and at night, for fear that she may be kidnapped on the road by some other aspiring lover—a practice that seems to indicate that an unprotected widow is, or was in the past, "fair game."

583 Two exceptional kinds of marriage I have dealt with in my previous study, *Le mariage chez les T'ou-jen.*
588 These are the "marriage to the pole," when a girl remains in the family in which she was born, but takes lovers and bears children, who instead of having the clan name of their father or fathers inherit the clan name of their mother's brothers and are treated as if they belonged to the patrilineal clan; and the "marriage to the girdle" when a girl, unmarried and living in her own family, has relations with a guest, who leaves her his girdle to which she may be "married" if she becomes pregnant.[3] Both of these customs appear to have been borrowed by the Monguors from the Tibetans.

The price paid for the bride is the subject of considerable negotiations between the families concerned, conducted by a go-between. It is usual for a girl to be a couple of years older than her husband, and the usual age for marriage is when the boy is fourteen, fifteen, or sixteen. Divorce and repudiation by the husband are rather rare.[4]

THE POSITION OF WOMEN

562 The status of the wife is inferior to that of the hus-
581 band, as is inevitable in a society in which social rights and family property are regarded as belonging primarily

[3] See above, p. 78, n. 5.

[4] Here only a few data are given about marriage customs, since I have already published an extensive monograph on this subject; see *Le mariage chez les T'ou-jen (Monguors) du Kansou.*

/9 cont'd/

181 595 compared to the happiness of having descendants. This way of thinking has distant origins; the T'ou-jen inherited it from their ancestors, and they have kept it scrupulously for centuries. Let us not be surprised therefore that because of it certain customs which seem inadmissible and shocking to us appear reasonable and justifiable to the T'ou-jen.

We shall set forth in what follows the matrimonial customs of a people which is convinced of the duty of marrying, and which expects male descendants from marriage.

/10/ Division of the Study

583 Marriage is the legal union of a man and woman. But with the T'ou-jen the daughter being the property of the parents, in the true sense of the term, an indemnity is imposed on the one who wishes to marry her.

This indemnity is paid in two ways; either by purchase or by the furnishing of his person or his services for the benefit of the owner of the girl.

587 The marriage of widows, which still often takes place nowadays in the ancient form of abduction, nevertheless falls in the category of marriage by purchase; for after having taken the widow to a safe place, a discussion is held about her price. Therefore, we shall deal successively with:

I. Marriage by purchase
II. Marriage by furnishing ones services or person
III. Abnormal marriages
IV. Divorce, repudiation, and exchange of wives
V. Runaway wives
VI. The matriarchate

Mo 582 /18 cont'd/ When the T'ou-jen give their children in marriage, nowadays at least, they attach importance to the degree of generation of the two parties: thus a nephew will never be able to marry his aunt, or an uncle his niece. The two parties must always be of the same generation.

Mo 587 563 This same law operates among the Chinese. Among the T'ou-jen, however, it is not so strict as among the Chinese in the case of marriages between the widow of an elder brother and his younger brother. /19/ Among the Chinese of the country, an elder brother will be able to marry the widow of his younger brother, but never vice versa.

Mo 582 563 As for marriages of T'ou-jen with Chinese girls, they are strongly discouraged by the elders of the tribe as being the great cause of their denationalization. Nonetheless, nowadays these marriages are more and more frequent, all the more so because of the example set by the clan chiefs. These unions precipitate the progress of the T'ou-jen people toward absorption in the Chinese nation.

Mo 563 582 Very often one sees the T'ou-jen give their daughters in marriage to Tibetans. The seminomadic Tibetans, their neighbors, even seem to seek them because of their fecundity, which is well known in the region. On the other hand, it is astonishing to see how easily T'ou-jen girls adjust among the Tibetans and adopt their ways.

Ma (1) 582

1. Among the Manchu the laws regarding the "parties" to a marriage are more complicated than among the T'ou-jen. Shirokogoroff, op. cit., p. 65 and following, says:

The women that may marry a man are limited to three restrictions: 1. the absolute prohibition, which they do not transgress; i.e. the prohibition to marry within the clan: (this law is explained as follows:) the general prohibition is to

/29 cont'd/

584 virtues of the bridegroom and his family and predict such a fine future for the girl that the whole family will end up by being satisfied in spite of themselves.

However, they will leave a door open in case the bridegroom's family should refuse their assent. They will explain therefore that they will still have all the trouble in the world in having their propo- [583] sitions accepted by the bridegroom's family. When they leave they will take back on behalf of the bride's family two jugs of gin, three feet of green cloth, and three lengths of green cord for plaiting in the hair.

The bridegroom's family waits with impatience. A report must now be given of the whole discussion, and especially of its practical conclusions. Then it is the other side of the picture, and with all the eloquence of which they are capable, they try to present the propositions as being eminently advantageous; they put forth the difficulties they have had to overcome in order to get there, then also, there is the girl who will make an admirable wife....

Ordinarily they resign themselves and accept the propositions; but it also may happen that the discussions have to be undertaken again at a second session, which is not auspicious. Nevertheless, it is extremely rare that they do not succeed in coming to terms and in reaching an understanding.

587 Let us note that in the marriage of a girl, even though there is only one single go-between, no marriage contract is written nor even a list of the gifts to be offered; while in the marriage of a widow, although there are two go-betweens, a contract is necessary, duly signed by the widow's parents-in-law and the go-betweens.

/30/ 6. Delivery of the Presents Demanded for the Bride

583 a) When do they proceed to the delivery of the presents?

In the exceptional case where the girl is thirteen or fourteen years old when she is sought in marriage, then during the month following the choice of gifts, they try to offer what was agreed upon.

In other cases where the formalities were decided when the girl was still little, they usually wait until she has reached her

2: Schram--99 M-4, 5(1915-1920). 1932 AE9 Monguor AE9
Miao AE5

/86 cont'd/

Mi 582

has the force of law, which requires taking a wife of one's own race. Savina, Hist. des Miao, p. 284.

/87/ 8. Marriages of Widows as Official Wives

Mo 587 589

Summary. -- 1. Rights of widows, theory and practice. 2. Procedure for the purchase of a widow. 3. Departure of the widow. 4. Settling of accounts. 5. Marriage of widows. 6. Two typical abductions of widows. 7. Vestiges of marriage by abduction among the T'ou-jen.

1. Rights of Widows, Theory and Practice

When parents give a daughter in marriage, they say, "We have taken leave of our daughter," or "We have given our daughter," or even with a slight scorn "We have sold her"; which denotes clearly that a girl's marriage is not her own affair but definitely the business of her parents. On the other hand, when a widow marries, they say, "She has found a man," that is, that she herself has chosen her husband and that she has acted in complete freedom. Besides, the adage says, "Ts'ien kia yeou tié-niang, heou-kia yeou pen-jen," i.e., the first marriage is arranged by the parents, subsequent marriages no longer depend on the parents but on the widow herself.

The terminology used to indicate these two kinds of marriages, as well as this adage, both throw light on the new situation of a woman in widowhood. Everything depends on her; she will remarry or not, and she will choose by herself the husband she wants. At

Mo [183]

least this is the theory. Yet in practice her right will be respected as long as her owners find no disadvantage in the decision taken by her. It may even happen that she is married off by force by her parents-in-law, and even that she is simply abducted by an unknown man. This is to say that everywhere praxis differs from speculation /"practice differs from theory"/. But /88/ let us remember this: in case of litigation, everywhere among the T'ou-jen, the rights of the widow

Mo 537 589 /88 cont'd/ will be invoked, and these rights will form the basis of the discussion.

Mo [765] Therefore after the death of the husband, according to custom the widow will stay in the home of her parents-in-law 49 days. These days are called days of mourning. When this period of time has gone by, she will definitely be able to leave her parents-in-law and go back to her own family. That is her right.

Mo 589 However, at least I have known more than one case where young widows did not wait for the 49 days to pass before leaving the parents-in-law; they simply fled. This is because they had wind of the dealings of the parents-in-law, who were getting ready to sell them against their wishes. The right of widows is then a precarious right. A widow without sons looks quickly for a match, for she knows well that if she does not look for him herself, her hand will be forced. (1)

Ma 587

1. Shirokogoroff, Social Organization of the Manchus, pp. 70, 71: There are some peculiarities as to the widow's and the widower's marriage. The widow can be remarried according to her personal choice and wish. None of her clan, i.e. her husband's clan, can force her to do it. The late husband's younger brother is always obliged to take care of the widow and his brother's children. The widow has the right to request the separation of her family from the rest of her husband's family and in this case she inherits all the property of her husband. /Cited in English./

Ma 614 589 P. 54: If a widow declares to the Mokunda (the clan chief) that she does not wish to be remarried, but the relatives of her late husband persist on it,

/88 cont'd/

Ma 614 589

the Mokunda may decide if she shall be remarried or not, and usually he takes the widow's interest into consideration. /Cited in English, with French interpolation indicated by parentheses./

2. Procedure for the Purchase of a Widow

Mo 587 [765]

Let us suppose that a young widow has returned to her parents' home 89 days after the death of her husband. It is one of the facts of the day, known immediately throughout the whole region, all the more because everybody knows she is waiting for a match. The candidates who have already made inquiries ask through a go-between or even personally for an interview with the widow. This interview ordinarily takes place at the home of a neighbor or friend. If the [illegible] negotiations have results, the two parties generally give each other a token; the widow gives her ring or her earrings or her bracelet, the future husband invariably gives his belt. These tokens bestow the right to act with force in case of contest, of rivalry, or of resistance on the part of the widow's owners. Only a few days after the interview, for such marriages move with precipitation and in the greatest secrecy for fear that the widow will be abducted by a rival, the suitor sends to the widow's "own" parents two go-betweens. They present themselves with the traditional jug of gin and arrange for the earnest, which is here insignificant. It generally does not exceed about ten strings of cash. It is a pure formality. They leave from home, enjoining the greatest secrecy, to go to the home of the former parents-in-law of the widow in order to obtain their consent and to discuss the price. The parents-in-law are indeed the owners of the widow.

Mo 587 606

When the parents-in-law are well disposed and willing to discuss in question, they are offered a jug of gin; in the opposite case the jug is taken away, and plans are made to abduct the widow by force and as quickly as possible. But when all goes well, the go-betweens come back the second day and begin by promising the

/89 cont'd/

Mo 587 606 mother-in-law two bricks of tea, which is what they call k'ai k'eou ts'ien, i.e., "the cash which open her mouth"; next they promise the father-in-law 12 strings of cash, called tchou hoen ts'ien, i.e., "the cash which make him take upon himself the responsibility for the marriage." (1) Then they discuss the price of the widow, a

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1. Shirokogoroff, op. cit., p. 75: The Manchus do not pay "kalin" if the woman demanded is a widow. /Cited in English./

price which ordinarily varies between 150 and 200 strings of cash. Again, since it will be necessary to write a contract, and since all the grandfathers, uncles, and brothers will have to affix their signatures to it, /90/ they discuss the price and the number of signers at the rate of three strings of cash per signature. Three or four relatives of the family take part in this discussion, which always takes place at night.

Mo [583] This sum is called ming ts'ien /"money in the open"/, i.e., the official or public price of the widow. Very often it happens that one or another member of the family secretly lets it be known that he opposes this marriage and that he will cause difficulties.

Ordinarily these recalcitrants take advantage of their relationship to make some easy money. They take them privately and discusses with them in secret the sum of money which their consent is worth. This is the ngan ts'ien, i.e., "the secret money," which very often is far from being insignificant. It is what makes people say that the expenditures made for widows, particularly for those who are going to be second wives, are based on the wealth of the suitor.

Mo 587 585 These negotiations with the surly relatives having produced results and the price being agreed upon, the suitor must make his decision. When consent is given, he does not pay the money; he will pay only on the day when the widow has crossed the threshold of his house. We have seen exactly the opposite for the marriage of

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587 [585] girls; they are allowed to leave home only when the very last cash has been paid.

This is because there are so many unforeseen events in this kind of marriage: the widow can deceive the suitor, the parents-in-law can play bad tricks on him, the parents of the widow can do the same, an unknown man can abduct her forcibly at night....Because of these risks the go-betweens do not dare demand payment of the sum before the widow is at her husband's home. A second precaution to take in order to avoid subsequent difficulties consists in the writing of a contract duly signed by the whole family of the parents-in-law, which is scarcely required for the marriage of girls. The marriage contract of a widow is signed only when she has entered the house of her /91/ husband and the money is counted on the table. In the old days, it is said, they used to do without a contract, and they contented themselves with taking the widow's ring, breaking it in two, and giving half to each party.

It is in the evening or at night that they go to get widows, and that is always done without anyone's knowledge. These precautions are needed when one knows the way of thinking of the T'ou-jen, according to which the widow belongs to anyone who can take her. [589] When a widow has made her choice and the negotiations have been begun, she will no longer dare to leave her house; in the evening she will call trusted men, who will mount guard, armed to the teeth. Her parents will be careful to distribute the sa lou ts'ien /"money to block the road"/ to the neighbors: This is the money bestowed on the neighbors so that they will defend the widow in case of an abduction.

3. Departure of the Widow

A band of ten to 20 men armed with swords, sticks, guns... go away in the night and in the greatest silence to get the widow. The greater the danger appears, the larger will be the escort. The widow is at the home of her parents or has gone to some agreed-upon place. The parents will consent to the departure of their

/91 cont'd/

587 widow-daughter only when the go-betweens have paid them ing ts'in ts'ien, i.e., "cash for cooperation in the marriage," ordinarily 12 strings of cash. This sum paid, no time is lost; they hurry to put the widow in the saddle, the band surrounds her and leaves post-haste, taking care to go a roundabout way in order to escape all risk and conduct her safe and sound to the home of her new husband.

On arrival she dismounts; a fire is lighted in great haste in front of the house, and the widow is presented with the paper which one burns for the dead. She kneels and burns it in memory of her dead husband; then she offers up a libation of gin for him. She stands and looks into space for several moments. /92/ This is the wang heou k'an /"taking the last look"/, the farewell look toward her dead husband. She passes over the fire so that all the bad influences which could have attached themselves to her, or the bad spirits which could have followed her, will vanish. Having crossed the fire, she enters the house only after taking off her little felt hat and undoing her hair, which she rolls up carelessly and puts back under her hat. She will wear her hair in the style of the women of the clan or village to which she is henceforth deemed to belong.

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The armed band is invited to a light meal composed of bread, meat, tea, and gin. The widow takes tea with the women of the family.

4. Settling of Accounts

597 583 177 The widow is not secure so long as the accounts are not settled and the contract is not signed; so they hurry first thing in the morning to finish the business. The go-betweens first pay secret sums to the grumblers, then accounts are settled with the parents-in-law and the widow. For this purpose they are asked to go, not to the home of the new husband, but to a friend's home or to a remote place. The price of a girl is paid in full, while that of a widow is subject to bold acts of stinginess. Only judge: 600 cash are worth 1,000; at present animals must be accepted in place of paying in silver, and they are evaluated at double their value. They give cloth which they claim

/92 cont'd/

587 177 583 is too expensive, then they tear a piece of cloth in two to make it count for two pieces. It is the famous koa-fou ts'ien, i.e., "the price of widows." It is a practice which the T'ou-jen learned from the Chinese, who are past masters in such matters.

587 178 But although custom admits these practices, it is not rare that the settling of accounts degenerates into brawls. The contract is written and signed this same day, and the signers are /93/ reimbursed. The mother-in-law is offered the pieces of tea which were promised to her so that she would consent to the marriage, and the father receives his tchou hoen tsien.

5. Marriage of Widows

587 A marriage ceremony takes place the same day if possible or the next day. They invite to the home of the new son-in-law the father and mother, uncles and aunts, brothers and sisters of the newly taken away widow. It is a little group of eight, ten, or 15 persons, among whom the go-betweens are counted.

Tea, bread, gin are served as usual; then the parents give their daughter a new long gown, and to the son-in-law a felt hat and a belt. Often they add a pair of shoes for the new mother-in-law, and a k'ata for the father-in-law.

A table is set up in front of a religious image. Two lighted lamps are placed on it; a rug is spread out in front of the table. The widow clothed in the new gown which she has just received from her parents and the son-in-law also wearing the new hat and belt make the great prostration in the Chinese manner, first to heaven and the multifarious spirits, then to their parents and the elders of the family, third to the family related through marriage and to the clan. The sacred shamanistic fire is absent.

The father-in-law then presents four strings of cash to his new son-in-law as a token of their alliance; the whole family together politely refuses them. Three strings of cash are given to those who wrote the contract and to the go-betweens; then a light meal is served. At the departure of the guests, they are not given meat to take away; the hosts are satisfied to offer several loaves of bread.

/93 cont'd/

587 [604] The customary proceedings of the marriage of a widow then are very simple; the maternal uncle who plays the most important role at the marriage of girls does not even appear. The great preoccupation of the T'ou-jen in the marriage of a widow is to take her away from a rival /94/ and to conduct her without let or hindrance to her new domicile.

6. Two Typical Abductions of Widows

587 583 The following incidents throw a true light on the T'ou-jen way of thinking concerning the marriage of widows.

At the place Souo-pou-keou lived a widow of a certain Hla Rong. A Tchang of Ki-kia-lin, wishing to marry her, learned that he was too late; the widow had already given her consent to another and had exchanged tokens with him. Tchang wanted her at any price. He proposed therefore to abduct her by force, then to get in touch with the family of the former parents-in-law of the widow to give them the earnest. If such affairs are taken to court, reimbursement of the earnest is required from the abductors, then the woman is [671] granted to them. These abductions are thus recognized by the law. Tchang calls upon the help of about 30 trustworthy men, well armed, to take away the widow from the hands of his rival's band the night when the rival would take her to his home. The abductors were at their post, but the other band did not arrive. Believing therefore that they had been fooled, they decided to go to the widow's house, take it by assault, and abduct the widow.

Tchang counted as head of his band the widow's nephew, who could inform them about the arrangement of the house. They burst into the courtyard, they force the doors, they gag the woman, four of them carry her outside, they put her on the horse, and they flee [492] hurriedly. Meanwhile the nephew had been taking care of the dogs and had opened the great door.

The journey went on in the greatest silence. After 15 kilometers of forced march they arrived home; removed the gag from the woman, and untied her hands. What was their surprise when in

/94 cont'd/

587 the darkness they heard the woman affirm that they had been mistaken;
583 that she was a neighbor who had come to keep the widow company; that she was married and /95/ that her husband was very much alive, and that the person they were looking for had hidden behind a wardrobe at the moment of danger. Consternation!

What to do? Sending back the woman was a loss of face, and then she did not want to go back.

[627 684] The incident was known everywhere in the region from the next day on; the widow's parents and the husband of the abducted woman were already getting ready to bring suit against the woman's abductors. The elders of the village knew that it was a mistake and proposed to arrange the affair amicably.

There was a palaver and a dinner, which my catchist attended. The conclusion of the discussion was that the young wife was to be taken back on horseback with a band at the head of the procession and a salvo of firecrackers. A sheep with a scarf of red cloth on its horns was to be offered, and apologies were to be made. They laughed heartily in the region at the unfortunate nephew who had presided at the abduction of his aunt.... The young widow meanwhile was married to the man of her choice.

Another very interesting incident for understanding the T'ou-jen way of thinking on the subject of abduction and the conditions which permit it is the following:

A young widow of Pien-tan, after negotiations in due form, was taken at night to the home of a Tchao of Na-ling keou. Tchao, who was known for his avarice and had a very bad reputation, tried to pick a quarrel with the go-betweens on the subject of the widow's price, although the sum had already been agreed on. He wanted to be shrewd. Since the widow was at his house, he hoped to drag out the settlement of accounts and to get out of it by giving only part of it the agreed-upon price. After three weeks the matter was still dragging on, nothing had yet been paid, and consequently the contract had not yet been signed. New palaver in the courtyard of the pagoda two li distant from his house. Now in the absence of Tchao, a certain Tchang of Tong-keou, accompanied /96/ by several men

/96 cont'd/
587 he could rely on, came to abduct the newly married widow in broad
583 daylight. It is probable that she consented to being abducted; for living with her new husband for a month, she had been able to judge him. It is equally probable that the go-betweens and the former parents-in-law of the widow were in on it; perhaps the neighbors who did not sympathize with Tchao were not strangers to it either, for they did not budge when the people came to abduct the widow.
[672] Tchao goes to the Chinese city to bring suit. The Chinese judgment was the following: The widow must be sent back to her parents' home and neither Tchao nor Tchang may marry her.

According to T'ou-jen custom, the woman would have had to stay with Tchang, and Tchao by reason of not having paid the agreed-upon sum in time lost entirely all right over the widow.

7. Vestiges of Marriage by Abduction among the T'ou-jen

587 One can conclude from the preceding that nowadays the pur-
671 chase of the wife by the husband is the legal form of marriage, while
582 also recognizing as legal the abduction of a widow, on condition that the owners be indemnified.

583 One can believe that formerly the custom of abduction must have been general and that it was practiced for marriages of girls. Indeed, numerous vestiges of abduction are found in the customs surrounding the marriage of girls. When the son-in-law with his companions comes to get the bride, why does he find the door of the house shut? Why is it necessary to end up by breaking it in and receiving an avalanche of water on the head? This certainly is an assault on the girl's dwelling. When they sing at the door and ask that it be opened, one feels that this way is not natural and that in addition there is no sense to it. Besides, the song has nothing in it that is prescribed, when everything else in the customs is clearly fixed, even the speeches that are made. Why this thick veil /97/ which envelops the bride's head and which does not allow her to see; it is even tied around the neck with a red cord. Is it not to bandage the eyes of a person who is being abducted? At the moment of carrying the bride outside, why this abruptness, the door of the room which

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p. 320: There are (among the Hé-miao) abductions with tacit consent. It is then to avoid all expense. P. 342: One likewise finds vestiges of abduction among the Song-kia-tse.

Dr. Herbert König, op. cit. /"Das Recht der Polarvoelker (The Law of the Polar Peoples)," Anthropos, 1928-29/, pp. 119-120, 121. Marriage by Capture and Elopement. As in the Old Australian Culture according to Graebner, marriage by capture should, according to him (Schmidt, Koppers), be a normal legal institution among the pastoral peoples and also the polar peoples among them, whom he includes in the northern group. Now it is true that the procurement of women by force for marriage is found among almost all polar peoples, and it is not at all uncommon. Once upon a time, however, (marriage by capture) supposedly was a legal custom, at least in former times. /Cited in English./

583 some which taken separately admit of another explanation. But is it not rational to explain them in this sense when, on the one hand, abduction is still practiced today for widows, and when, on the [587] other hand, some /details/ are found among them which are certainly not explainable without admitting abduction? Thus one can be tempted to explain the following of the bride by the girls of the village as being one step in conducting their friend. But then why do they take the horse's bridle and try to prevent his departure, and why is this ceremony called "pursuit of the lady?" One can find fault again with the fact that the bride's own brothers /99/ carry her out of the room, and with this other that a member of the family

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Mo 595 589 Besides sterility and scarcity of children, which are above all the determining and positive causes of polygamy, there is another cause which is rather passive-negative in the sense that polygamy in this case is rather necessitated by circumstances which do not depend on the wife and is brought on by the situation in which she finds herself. This is the case of the widow upon the decease of the husband among the T'ou-jen.

Mo 587 595 The young widow, who has ordinarily borne several children, finds herself at this moment of her life completely perplexed: to remarry is to run toward the unknown and to abandon her children, who, in her opinion, will be unhappy for the rest of their lives. How can she live without these children? Staying in the family as a widow is advised against for her because of her relative youth... /103/ moreover one of her sons will perhaps be able to marry in two or three years...the position of mother-in-law appeals to her. The family of the parents-in-law understands also what it will lose upon the departure of this fertile woman, and what her children will lose. In this case the mother-in-law, during the 49 days following the death, proposes to the widow that she not leave them and that she marry one of the brothers of the dead man. If there are unmarried sons in the family, a match from among them is proposed to her, the difference in age between husband and wife having little importance in T'ou-jen country. If all the sons are married, she can remarry as the second wife of one of her husband's brothers, little does it matter whether he is older or younger than the dead man.

That is a case of polygamy very common among widows who have children. It is the levirate. Although in theory widows are free to go back to their maternal families after the 49 days of mourning and to marry again at another wedding, they very often remain as the second wife of one of the brothers of the dead husband in order to take care of their children. (1)

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1. Shirokogoroff, op. cit., p. 64: The widow can marry anyone of her husband's clan members except his

/103 cont'd/

Mo 587 595 brothers, but this marriage is considered as if she would marry a man of a foreign clan. Thus the custom known as the levirate as a matrimonia form is not practised among the Manchus. P. 70-71: The widow cannot be remarried if she has a son of age over 12. If a widower marry a widow, the marriage between their children born before their second marriage is strictly prohibited. /Cited in English./ This is not the case among the T'ou-jen.

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Mo [582]

Mo 587 177 Nevertheless, the Li t'ou-se, present head of one of the most important T'ou-jen clans, forbade marriages of widows of an elder brother to one of the younger brothers of the dead man either as official wife or as second wife. The Chinese disapprove of such unions, and the Li t'ou-se made this prohibition so as not to scandalize them. He made inquiries about marriages in his clan, and punished those who had disregarded his orders. The fine consisted of a pig to be offered to his ancestors; he wished by respect for his ancestors to protest his attachment to the old customs of the race.

Mo 582 587 /104/ The elders used to claim nevertheless that these unions were permitted by custom. (1) I believe all the more willingly

1. Bartold, Turkestan down to the Mongol Invasion, (1928), p. 390: The custom of marrying the father's widow was still maintained among the Uighurs, but has now disappeared among the Mongols under the influence of Buddhism. /Cited in English./

when I think of an old custom of the Mongols, brothers by race of the T'ou-jen, which permitted the sons to marry even the concubines of their dead father, with the exception of marrying their own mother; and I believe it also because this prohibition does not exist in the other T'ou-jen clans.

/104 cont'd/

595 The T'ou-jen find this kind of polygamy rational when they
587 think of the sad condition in which orphans are put, who, they say, will have to count solely on the grandparents alone, who are already old. I believe that the true explanation of this fact must be found in the former custom which did not permit widows to leave the clan.

Notice with respect to this very special category of polygamists the very special manner in which one speaks of these marriages. One does not say that the widow looked for a husband, as one says in the case of widows who remarry outside the clan of the parents-in-law, but one says satun xâgu, "to cover the shadow." (2) Is it the

[587 775]

2. It is perhaps useful to note in connection with the expression "to cover the shadow," the way of thinking of the Ou-hoan, Sien-pi peoples (Tong hou peoples) on the subject of the condition of widows in the world beyond. Parker, A Thousand Years of the Tartars, 2nd ed., p. 85: (The widow after being remarried either to her husband's brothers or to his paternal uncles...) "after death reverted to her first husband in the next world." /Cited in English, with introductory part in French./

new husband who covers the shadow of his dead brother, so that this shadow will do no more evil? Among the T'ou-jen the shamans claim that all illnesses are caused by the passage of the shadow of a dead person over the body of a person in good health.

587 Yet it happens, when widows are no longer young, that they
589 stay in the family of their parents-in-law without remarrying, sole-
765 ly in order to care for their children. When /105/ widows who have not remarried bear another child during the two years following the death of the husband, such a case does not surprise the T'ou-jen too much; the child is supposed to be the child of the dead man. It is

/105 cont'd/

then called, if it is a son, either, according to the Chinese custom, Hiao cheng tse, i.e., "/son/ born during the mourning period," or else, according to the T'ou-jen custom, xara khû, i.e., "black son," which again means "son of mourning" since black is the color of mourning among the T'ou-jen; they say "to wear black" for "to be in mourning." Black was formerly also the color of mourning among the Mongols. When widows who have not remarried bear children after two years, it happens that these children are abandoned or that they are drowned right after birth, especially if they are girls. That happens when the family has many children, or when some of the neighbors wants to feed the poor being. When the newborn is a son, they will keep him, but he will not inherit family property, and as a general rule they will send him at about the age of nine or ten to a lamasery to remain a bachelor. This is the most practical solution for avoiding difficulties in the family later. (1)

1. Shirokogoroff, op. cit. p. 77: The Manchus are very strict in killing illegitimate children, i.e. the children born by unmarried girls and widows.
The other Tungus groups consider girls who have children as the best for marriage, because these girls have the proof of their fecundity. /Cited in English./

c) The third category of polygamists is met in well-to-do families who lack workers.

We have seen that all the work, so to speak, is assigned to the wife; the household duties, the care of the livestock, and a large part of the work in the fields. A T'ou-jen wife actually kills herself with work. It is painful to us to look at these men with the nomadic instinct, do-nothings, idlers, spare themselves the least fatigue. It can happen, therefore, in families which have much

/107 cont'd/

595 family to announce his intention to them. The envoy will bring the
606 traditional jug of gin and will say that their daughter has given her consent to her husband's wishes for such and such a reason. Then he will beg the parents not to make difficulties for the son-in-law. His mission will be easy to carry out when it is a question of sterility, of widowhood, or of lack of workers. He will meet difficulties, often serious, when he has a case in the fourth category of polygamists to present.

595 762 The purpose of this interview is above all to come to an understanding with this family, who will claim to have given their daughter to be the sole mistress of the house. Then, it is a precautionary measure. Experience has taught that these unions are often disastrous, and that it is among them that the greatest number of suicide is found. Now we know the T'ou-jens' profound fear of suicides, which regularly ruin the families concerned. In case of a suicide, the clans of the mother and father of the unfortunate woman present themselves in order to demand an account of the death of their daughter. If before concubinage it has been possible to obtain the consent of the family, later, if ever the misfortune comes, there will be more chance for an understanding. The husband first asks for his wife's consent because he also knows that suicide is her supreme weapon and that he can do nothing against it.

595 587 The second wife that the T'ou-jen takes is either a girl or a widow. If she is a widow, they follow the procedure for the marriage of widows; the price of a concubine widow is double or triple that of an official wife. If the second wife is a girl, they go through all the phases of the marriage of girls.

595 Well-to-do families rarely give their daughters to be concubines. Poor families will "resign themselves" to it wholeheartedly, fascinated by the extraordinary compensations which they receive for this "sacrifice." The price of girl concubines /108/ go up to 300 strings of cash and more, without counting the clothes, the dinner, and the rest; which proves abundantly that the financial situation plays a fundamental role in polygamy.

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and in part that of polygamy. We wish to speak /110/ of the custom which says that widows upon the death of their husbands should not leave the husband's family but be remarried, either to the dead man's brother or to his paternal uncle.

We cannot attach too much importance to this institution, first because of its universality, then because of its great age and the length of its existence. Indeed, this practice has been in force among all the nomadic peoples who have wandered in the immense steppes of northern and southern Asia, as Chinese history attests. (1)

1. Parker, A Thousand Years of the Tartars, 2nd ed., p. 4: A universal custom, which as we shall see, extended for a thousand years over the whole of Tartary, was for the son to take over his deceased father's wives (with exception of his own natural mother) and for younger brothers to take over the widows of their elder brethren. It does not appear quite certain whether the son or the brother had first choice; perhaps the brother only took when there was no son, possible vice-versa. /Cited in English./ Parker, p. 19, cites this practice among the Hiung-nu; p. 85, among the Wu hwan and Sien-pi; p. 109, among the T'u-yu-hun. Barthold cites it among the Ouigour and Mongols, cf. note, p. 104.

As a consequence of this fact it is not a question of speaking in any way of widow marriage for all this period of history. Widows used to simply pass to other members of the same family. From that

/110 cont'd/

587 come the incoherences we have been able to establish in the present-day rites of the marriage of widows. Neither should the existence of the practice of abduction of widows be supposed for this period. It is therefore natural to conclude that, for all this period, the marriage of girls is to be considered as the only and true marriage, and that the practice of abduction existed only for them. This fact has its importance again in the question of polygamy among the T'ou-jen, because it explains a special category of polygamy still practiced nowadays. The T'ou-jen, no longer having any recollection of this institution which existed among his ancestors, today seeks an arbitrary explanation for this problem.

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101 /111/ Northern and central Asia has been the theater of numerous migrations, peaceful and otherwise, in historic and prehistoric times, of peoples having extremely varied social organizations. From this come the analogies and the ethnological borrowings ascertained among the peoples on both sides of the Bering Strait, and among the "middle and western Eurasians."

114 I summarize in this place the monumenta ethnographica which shed a new light on the chapter on "marriage by purchase" among the T'ou-jen, whose ancestors, Mongols and Cha-t'ou, were nomads.

For this purpose I use the judicious inclusive study of Dr. Herbert König, "Das Recht der Polarvölker, IV. Das Eherecht der Polarvölker," Anthropos (1928-29).

583 171 Anthropos, 1929, p. 101, Bride Price /Brautkauf/ among the Central and Western Eurasians ... Bride-price marriage coincides in distribution almost exactly with the peoples in the polar region who have an aristocratic social organization. It is specifically reported and described in detail for the Tungus, Jakut, Samojed, Ostjak, and Lapps, and, to be sure, as a unique way of concluding marriage. Page 104. The picture

/112 cont'd/

583 A. A widow

B. A girl, or the question of husband-sons-in-law

A. Marriage of a Widow

587 One marries a widow without having to pay for her when she is indigent and finds herself after the death of her husband with three or four children; when furthermore she is alone in the world by reason of the fact that she has no brothers-in-law, or if she has, they are too poor to provide for her needs. This is then the case of widows without means of subsistence.

583 /113/ There are naturally few with a taste for this kind of
587 marriage, for those who venture into such will have to raise another person's children, who, sooner or later, if they do not return bad for good, will at least be very little grateful for the care which has been given them. This kind of marriage is literally that called by the Chinese tchao fou iang tse, i.e., "looking for a husband who will feed the children." Although these unions are not advantageous for the husband, nevertheless there are always poor men of some age who, attracted by the hope of offspring, decide to expose themselves to the dangers of such a union, or who rather allow themselves tobe tempted by the widow. Indeed, the terms of this marriage say clearly that it is the widow who is seeking the husband. That says enough,
584 that these unions are not highly prized. In such a marriage, the two
587 parties agree on it first between themselves. Their decision made, they themselves invite a go-between, who will go to see the paternal uncles and the grandparents of the children. The T'ou-jen family has an agnatic base, and the family system is that of the large family
589 with community of property. On the death of the husband, the
421 widow remains therefore within the domain of the community; consequently, it will be necessary to recognize her owners. But since this property is rather a burden for them, it will be easy to come to an agreement. Furthermore, the widow's family knows that if it is not accommodating, the widow will be able to give them a lot of trouble.

/113 cont'd/

587 593 764 The conditions the family lays down are the following: the sons will remain the descendants of the dead man; they will continue to bear his name and will later be buried in their father's cemetery. The new husband will bring them up and feed them. When they reach marriageable age, he will buy them a wife, or he will give the family the required sum ad hoc; then he will be able to send away the married ones, who will provide for their own subsistence. As for the daughters, he will be able to sell them. Since he obligates himself for expenses which so many burdens necessitate, the family does not demand any compensation for the widow.

587 589 578 421 /114/ It often happens that as a consequence of misunderstandings and quarrels, the brothers divide up the property and debts among themselves and form independent families. When a widow of such a family wants to remarry, the family requires the new husband to recognize the debts of the dead man; and the creditors exert pressure on the family to prevent the marriage in case of refusal; but if they are lucky enough to be dealing with a virago who threatens to come with her children and live with them, the difficulties vanish, the debts are put on the children's account and will be demanded later when the children are grown.

587 428 593 In the case where the widow with her children has inherited several plots of land from her dead husband, the new husband will be able to work them to support his family, but he will not be able to sell them since they are the property of the male orphans /sic/. Once they are married, the latter can demand these lands and send their foster father away with their mother, which often happens; if they get along well, they stay together. If, on the other hand, the new husband has lands of his own, and the widow does not, he maintains the family, gets the sons married, and sends them away. If, during the marriage the family becomes richer, if the patrimony increases, and children are born of the new marriage, the children of the first husband will receive the share of their dead father plus half of the lands and assets acquired after the second marriage. The personal properties of the new husband are inherited by his own children. If the husband happens to die without leaving children, his personal

/114 cont'd/

Mo 587 assets and his widow being the property of his own family, they go back into its domain.

428 593 These conditions show clearly that the widow is considered to have left the family of her former parents-in-law completely; the Mo 589 latter have given up all the rights they had with respect to her and have entrusted the children to her with the obligation to raise them for their clan.

Mo 584 When such a marriage is made, a contract is always written in duplicate; /115/ one copy is kept by the husband, and the other is 587 675 given to the family of the former parents-in-law of the widow. In it minute mention is made of properties, debts, ... and then of the obligations of the new husband.

Mo 582 If they remain poor after the marriage and find it impossible to marry off the sons, when the latter have grown up they end up by going away as they wish.

Mo 587 591 There is no abduction to fear in the present case; the marriage takes place very simply and openly. If the widow has plots of land and the husband does not, he comes to live with her; in the opposite case, the widow with the children moves in with him. If neither one nor the other has anything, they look for a place to stay and go to live together. One prostration to heaven and to the spirits, in the presence of the go-between and the parents, and this is all the ceremony of such marriages; add to it another to the parents and to the go-between. (1)

Mo 428 589 425

1. Shirokogoroff, op. cit.[1], p. 142: If the widow and her daughters do not wish to be cared for by their husband's and father's brothers, they may also receive a part of the property. This part is equal to that of a brother. In this way the woman may become the owner of land and house. But this ownership can be maintained only during two generations (from mother to daughter) because the bride's

[1. Op cit ie: Social Organisation of the Manchus --- Analyst.]

/137 cont'd/
586 is for sale. These prices are as a general rule higher than those paid for a widow or a girl.

The agreement is generally concluded in the following manner: /138/ After the husband and wife have consulted together and the wife has found a place to go, the husband invites to his house two go-betweens, his uncles, and his brothers. He admits to them that the situation is impossible and that he wants to get rid of his wife; that she has found a prospective husband and that she is in agreement with him. Several days later the go-betweens one evening invite "to their home" the husband, his uncles, his brothers, the wife's prospective husband, and two or three of his friends. They first discuss the price of the woman. For people of average means, the price will vary between 200 and 300 strings of cash. Then they talk over the sum demanded by the signers of the contract, who as always try to profit by these transactions. The amount of money these people claim is sometimes very considerable and can represent half of the woman's price; it is because as members of the family, they do not permit this dishonor. Then comes the discussion of the sum which will be given to the woman's parents-in-law, who are supposed to oppose the divorce also, for they especially are sensitive to this loss of face for the whole family. This sum can go from ten to 50 strings of cash. The money stipulated for a divorce is required up to the last cash. The prospective husband puts the money into the hands of the go-betweens, who will give it to those who have a right to it after the signing of the contract.

586 675 587 This contract will never be written in any house but in a remote place, a ravine or a mountain cave. The first signer is the husband. He must sign with the left thumb and the right toe; for this purpose they smear the thumb and toe with ink and put them on the contract; then come the other signers, who sign by hand. When the contract is signed, the go-betweens go to get the woman and present her to her new owner. After all is arranged and the wife is already in her new dwelling, the go-betweens go to pay a visit to the wife's parents in order to announce the new marriage of their daughter to them and to bring a little gift on behalf of the new

/138 cont'd/

586 son-in-law. At the same time they invite them /139/ to come to
675 the home of the new son-in-law to be present at the wedding, which
587 is conducted according to the custom for the marriage of widows.

The go-betweens have a rather easy task at the home of the wife's parents, since it is their daughter who has herself sought a match and has been the cause of the divorce.

586 It is superfluous to say that divorces are viewed with disfavor. They always advise against taking a wife whose husband is living, for one does not divorce a good wife. These are costly and very risky marriages in this sense, that often harmony does not prevail very long between the new husband and wife. Also the adage says: He who has money does not buy the wife of a husband who is still living; he who has cash does not acquire lands situated on river banks (for fear of erosion).

The cause of the rarity of divorces and repudiations is to be sought in the dishonor which T'ou-jen common sense believes to be attached to them. This thesis is easily proved by the fact that they precisely allege dishonor to the family in order to be able to extort a large sum of money from the purchaser. Now the T'ou-jen do not let go of their money without serious reason! This thesis is again proved by the really lugubrious circumstances which accompany divorce and repudiation; these contracts are signed at night...in a cave, signed by the toe..., while all those present talk only of dishonor.... Now these circumstances of time, place, manner are not those of an honorable act. These circumstances leave a deep impression on the people. In addition, they always speak of a divorced woman with scorn, and of the man who married her. When they say that she is a houo jen ts'i, i.e., "the wife of a living man," they do not ask any further explanation; the situation is deemed to be known.

When, on the other hand, one thinks an instant about the solemnities which accompany the weddings of girls, of the expenses which are borne, and the trouble the whole clan, /140/ the friends, and neighbors take to pay their respects; when one thinks of the blessings which are wished for the couple and begged from heaven and the multifarious spirits, it is not surprising that the T'ou-jen believe

2: Schram--150 M-4, 5(1915-1920) 1932 AE9 Monguor AE9
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/142 cont'd/

Ma 586

(earnest). They pay it back only in the case, if it is paid and the bride runs away with someone else just before the wedding. Such cases are absolutely exceptional ... all this question must be reported to the clan. /Cited in English, with French interpolation, indicated by parentheses./

Mo 586

A case can occur in which the wife is the only guilty one. It is natural then that the wife's family does not require compensation, etc. I have never, however, heard it said that the guilty wife's family had to give back to the injured son-in-law the earnest received at the time of the marriage.

Mo 586 554

/143/ On the question of repudiation let us note that it is necessary to take account of many circumstances, of which one of the main ones is the economic status of the wife's family, the influence this family enjoys in the region, and above all the fact of having among its members people who will know how to cope with the husband's family in spite of everything. One must also take into account the power of the husband's family, which if it has influential protectors can allow itself to be prepared for all eventualities. In the Orient especially, it is not enough to have rights, it is necessary to be able to defend them.

C. Exchange of Married Women

Mo 437 593 587

I cannot pass by in silence the case of four families of Hong-ngai-tse-keou, who without recourse to divorce or repudiation got rid of their wives by mutually exchanging them, without further ceremony; the children remained in the families where they were born. All was arranged without go-betweens, contract, or expenses, by common agreement among those concerned.

These are the only cases of this practice which have come to my knowledge, and I think they are isolated cases which prove

Mo 437 593 587 /143 cont'd/ nothing. Public opinion strongly disclaimed this practice and the elders did not admit it. (1)

HT 437 587

1. David Macdonald, Moeurs et coutumes des Thibétains /Practices and Customs of the Tibetans/, p. 136: Another singular usage, but one which is practiced only in high circles, is that two men exchange their wives by mutual consent. The latter are consulted on the question, and their consent to the combination must be obtained.

Dr. Herbert König, op. cit., p. 137: Wife Exchange. It is also incorrect when Graebner says that it is precisely in the region of the Old Asiatic peoples that the custom flourishes most.... It is much more common generally among the Eskimo tribes known so far, and it is present among practically all of them, while among the Old Asiatics it is not known at all by the Korjak, far from it, and the Jukugir, too, have only a weak tendency toward it. /Cited in German./

Mo 587 437 593 177 /144/ I think I must point out the influence of Tibetan practices especially for this singular case. Indeed, each year one sees several T'ou-jen of Hong-ngai-tse-keou go to Tibet to sell mules from the Sining region. It would not be surprising if these T'ou-jen traders learned about this custom in Tibet and practiced it later.

/154 cont'd/

3. Importance of the Mother, the Daughter-in-law, the Child, the Maternal Clan

593 562 a) Abnormal interference in the marriage of her children.

In a patriarchal organization the wife does not own anything, she does not count; even her children do not belong to her. Is it not necessary therefore to explain the predominant position of the mother in the marriage rites as being a vestige of a /155/ former matriarchate: 573 Indeed, the wedding "seems" even in our day to be the business of the mother alone. Without speaking of the marriage promises made between mothers as yet only pregnant, we have seen that the official request for the bride is made by the mother alone. The consent given to the mother alone enjoys all the necessary guarantees so that they can allow themselves to wait four or five years more before getting a go-between. Likewise, when the earnest is discussed, it is again the mother alone who goes to ask for the girl to be married at an early date; only after the mother's request does the go-between appear in order to set the date and the rest. For marriages without ceremony it is the mother again who, with the go-between, goes incognito simplicity to get the bride who is poor. This fact is very significant. Along the way, what the sobbing bride fears most is that they will curse her by cursing her mother; this is the greatest injury that can be done to her.

606 587 593 When one examines present-day customs concerning young widows, one finds it abnormal in a patriarchal organization that the young widow after the 49 days of mourning goes back to her mother's family to stay there until her second marriage. Indeed, she is the property pure and simple of her parents-in-law. It is likewise abnormal that the go-betweens, at the time of the second marriage, address themselves to her own parents before addressing her mother-in-law. Does not that recall the time when the daughter was married at home and had no mother-in-law?

After addressing the mother, the go-between goes to the home of the widow's parents-in-law, and there again he accosts first the mother-in-law, just as if she had the widow-bride at her disposal

/155 cont'd/

606 ahead of all the other members of the family. What is typical is that
587 they call the money given to the mother-in-law k'ai k'eou ts'ien,
593 "the sum which opens her mouth," for if she does not open her mouth, that is to say, if she does not consent, the marriage comes to nought.
/156/

b) Succession on the maternal side.

562 Without admitting a former matriarchate, how can one explain
593 the situation of the women in the series of marriages to the prayer
88 pole, etc.? In this case the "girl-mother" is seen to enjoy all the rights of a married woman, her children bear her name and inherit in her clan beside the children of her brothers. This is certainly the case which makes kinship, order of succession, and the property of the family pass on the mother's side. This single case which continues to exist in the middle of a patriarchal period in which the children of daughters as well as their mother are considered as outside the family, deserves all attention.

c) Admission into the family of children born of outsider fathers.

562 Is it not permitted to see vestiges of the matriarchate in the
great facility with which they admit into the family the children of daughters-in-law and widows, born certainly of fathers who are outsiders: partus sequitur ventrem /"offspring proceed from the womb"/: they recognize only the mother. We have seen that here they are in a period of transition which begins to make this practice more and more difficult.

562 d) Frequent family visits of the daughter-in-law and right to
421 keep her property at her mother's home.
593
574 Again what can be said of the abnormal custom which allows the daughter-in-law these frequent visits and these long vacations with her family? This custom is not natural in a patriarchal organization where the daughter-in-law is the property of her husband, and where she must give this clan her life, her time, and all her work. This custom gives the impression that the daughter, after marriage, always continues to live with her own family and not that of her husband, (1) all the more /157/ because she keeps at her parents' home

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[Note on foreign text p. 49 cont.] offering is widespread everywhere among the nomads of Tsinghai and has been partially taken over by the Chinese. It is also practiced in all lamic monasteries. Even if it does not come from Buddhism, it has been taken up by it in the ritual and honored with "incense-sutras," which are recited during the burning of aromatic substances in honor of the gods. The additions superimposed on the original simple form also come from Lamaism. Concerning this original form, its origin and religious dedication to heaven, cf. Part Two.

783
372
[782]
[789]
[782]

The purification-fire: Aside from this incense offering, cypress incense is also burned on other occasions, but only for purification, for example, to fumigate the house to drive away the demons, to fumigate the sacrificial sheep, to fumigate the face and hands at religious ceremonies. This fire, however, is accorded no veneration; no kowtow is made before it; it is not sprinkled with water, and no butter or any kind of addition is put in it. It is not an offering. Should someone accidentally burn an actual incense offering, he can use even this for the purpose of purification (9).

[587]

9. [Foreign text p. 49.] On other occasions, too, the fire is used as a means of purification. For instance, according to an ancient custom, a Tujen widow, when she remarries, must step across a fire, just as among the Chia-Fandse the bride is led over fir-tree fire (sung-p'an).

[796]
[782]

The fire-jumping in the night of the full moon after New Year's may have the same significance; cf. "The New Year's Festival," Note 6. Not only the fire has

4: Schram M-5 (1911-1922) 1957 AE9 Monguor AE9

A widow who is remarrying, when she arrives at the door of her new husband's house, jumps over a fire kindled at the entrance of his courtyard, in order that the soul of her deceased husband will no longer follow and harm her.

Every time any utensil is supposed to have become impure, it is passed over a fire. The shamans and lamas, before using their religious paraphernalia, smoke them over a fire.

Usually the lamas, at the time of epidemics, try first to cajole and placate these evil doers, hoping that they will stay their calamities, making the magnificent fire offering called *tao Huo-t'an*, "the pouring of a plain of fire." It consists of burning, on a limited surface, a pile of logs of different kinds of wood, reputed to be odoriferous or expensive, with all available kinds of fragrant herbs and spices, dried aromatic flowers, all kinds of grains. The fire is lit by sparks struck from a flint, or by the rays of the sun passing through a magnifying glass, for the fire must be pure also. The fire is kept up by the intermittent pouring of molten butter on it by lamas, who recite texts during seven days in order to win the hearts of the evil doers. They make several *tormas* and design *mandalas* [17] for the arranagement of the logs. The whole is accompanied by an unusual display of the most detailed rites, for which each lama has his own explanation and his own way of acting, ringing bells, beating drums, blowing horns, while the family prostrates itself. This is the famous pouring of fire on a huge surface "in order to gain the good graces of the malignant spirits by a magnificent fire offering." [18]

Some lamas resort, for the same reason, to a "white Wei-sang." One hundred logs of odoriferous wood are white-washed with lime-wash and kindled as described above. The aim of the rite is again to pull the heartstrings of the evil spirits by means of a pure fire offering and to invite them to stop the calamities.

However, when the two rites have proved unsuccessful, the lamas try the "black Wei-sang," using the magical power of the fire for dispelling the evil spirits. In a forlorn and remote spot, a pile of the most inexpensive and dirty wood is prepared with all kinds of smelly herbs and spoiled grain. The fire is kindled with dung and on top of the blazing pile is poured the urine of a black donkey; *tormas* are made with black spoiled flour. Condemning the evil spirits with such an abject fire offering, they hope they will leave the family, or the village, in order to avoid scorn and disdain, and that the magical power of the fire for repelling them will be more effective.

[17] *Mandalas* are so-called "magic circles" by which the divinities are coerced into assisting the votary to reach "the other shore." While they are being made, the makers recite charmed sentences (dharani) supposed to have been composed by several divinities, which are used as incantations for procuring their assistance in peril as well as in ordinary temporal affairs. L. Waddell, *The Buddhism of Tibet or Lamaism*, 144, second ed., Cambridge, W. Heffer, 1934.

[18] Schröder, Der Feuerguss, *op. cit.*, 860.

N *563 M 592 554 has the privilege of naming his own children and grandchildren. When a granddaughter is to be married, the grandfather usually consults her father before taking any action.

B. Marriage and Divorce Customs

N *563 M 58 562 [769] [171] Among the Mongours marriage is considered not as an optional part, but as an extremely necessary part of life. Because of the veneration of ancestors, as with their Chinese neighbors, the Mongours regard male children as a necessity for carrying on the ancestral cult. Ummarried sons, or childless sons are considered a calamity. The poorest families will even sell part of their livestock and land or go into debt to get a bride for their son.

N *563 M 584 583 582 Marriages usually are arranged by a go-between, frequently the maternal uncle of the boy. The brideprice is subject to considerable negotiations between the two families. The girl chosen usually is two years older than the boy. The acceptable marriage age for boys is between 14-16.

Clan exogamy is observed among the Mongours. There is absolute prohibition against marriage within the clan. The rule is

N *563 M 614 582 565 sometimes overlooked by the commoners, but it is strictly observed among the nobles. Among the commoners, intermarriage with Tibetans and Chinese has contributed considerably to the weakening of this rule. In such instances, the clan itself is regarded as not being purely preserved. There is a feeling that it has been penetrated by foreign elements, and therefore the exogamy rules need not be observed as strictly.

N *563 M 582 Exogamy rules out marriage between children of brothers, but does not exclude marriage between the children of a brother and a sister, because the offspring of the latter belongs to a different clan.

M [587] A widowed wife, if living in the setting of the extended family, usually becomes the second wife of a brother of her late husband. However, if the brothers have already divided their inheritance and are living separately, she is free to remarry whomever she wants.

N *563 M 588 Two exceptional kinds of marriage, probably borrowed from the Tibetans, were noted by Schram. One is that of "marriage to the door post," whereby a girl remains in her family and clan, but takes lovers and bears children. Her children have her patrilineal clan name, remain within the family, and are treated as members of the patrilineal clan. The other is "marriage to the belt." A girl, unmarried and living with her own family, has relations with a guest, who leaves his belt, to which she may be "married" if she becomes pregnant.

N *563 M 604 The relationship between two families connected by marriage is maintained primarily by the maternal uncle. While not being part of his married sister's new family, he has a powerful influence

/The Monguors/

N *563 M 769 614 ginning of April according to the lunar calendar, in a festival similar to the Chinese Ch'ing-ming. On this occasion the clan assembles to venerate its ancestors, enjoy a great feast and reunion, and discuss matters of concern to the clan.

On the day of the assembly, the T'u-ssu, the chiefs and elders of the villages and all the family heads go to the graveyard immediately after breakfast, followed by all the other members of the clan. At the graveyard, offerings are made and rites are performed. Then food for the offerings is divided among the families, the oldest generations receiving their portions first.

M [182] [769] This annual veneration of the ancestors serves to reinforce the group unity of the Mongour clan. One of the family heads, usually of the nobility, is appointed to care for the graveyard during the following year. His duties include the collection of contributions and offerings, and the making of repairs. An assistant is assigned to help him with details.

b. Respect for elders and family heads

N *563 M 554 888 The Mongours once lived without chiefs, but never without village elders. Traditionally, the whole power of the clan was vested in the elders, who had the authority to appoint and dismiss chiefs. The village elders still take the most important part in local administration. Elders need not be rich or from noble stock, but they are men of good reputation from the more outstanding families.

N *563 M 554 592 Heads of families are also honored. At public meetings, all are allowed to express their views and defend their rights, but final decisions are made only after the heads of families have spoken.

c. Adultery

N *563 M 684 Adultery is looked upon as a serious crime. If caught, the guilty pair is flogged, the woman on her bare back, the man on bare buttocks and thighs, up to a hundred stripes. The man must confront the husband and make apologies, and present him with a sheep or a pig. A trial is held and fingerprints are taken. Then the pair is led through the village with drums beating while they make public confession of their sin, and they must secure an official statement of pardon.

d. Moral and legal concepts

N *563 M 183 M [593] [587] [421] Both moral and legal concepts of the Mongours seem to be based upon customs, tradition and what the community accepts as just. Some typical social values and concepts are: Wrongs must be righted and injustices corrected. Parents have authority over their children, and husbands over their wives. A widow has the right to remarry or to dispose of herself. Private property must be protected. No one has the right to disturb the peace of the community.

/The Monguors/

N *563 M 621 183 178

The village effectively governs itself, punishing offenders, righting wrongs and maintaining peace. Great stress is placed upon faithful adherence to the old customs, and one of the important duties of the village chief is to see that they are observed. In any discussion about village affairs, the supreme argument is that of old customs. To neglect or forget the customs of the ancestors would undermine the stability and prosperity of the clan. (See Social Structure.) This conviction is dinned into the ears of the young on every possible occasion. A good test of a prospective village chief or T'u-ssu is his firm and unshakable faith in the strict observance of clan tradition.

N *563 M 621 183 177 178

During the administration of the Chinese Nationalists, the village elders had a real struggle to save their old customs and traditions. Social concepts had been undermined gradually by the enrollment of Chinese into Mongour clans, and in villages where Chinese had become elders, Chinese concepts had seeped in and were creating repercussions among the young Mongours.

e. Stealing and gambling

N *563 M [685] [673] [525] [794]

Stealing is considered an unforgiveable sin, and stealing animals is the worst possible form of stealing. All thieves are punished severely; cattle thieves are shown no mercy.

Gambling is not permitted. Any offender must pay a fine, which is used for the upkeep of the temples or the expenses of the spring and autumn religious festivals.

f. Widowhood and remarriage

N *563 M 587

A widow is allowed to remarry, and to make her own decision about whether or whom to marry. If she consents to remarry, she will exchange girdles with her prospective second husband in token of her willingness. If she wishes to marry one man and is being compelled to marry another, she can notify the first of the time of her departure to the home of the second, and the desired mate may kidnap her on the way. If a widow is kidnapped against her will, however, the matter is taken to the chief and the village elders.

g. Discipline of children

N *563 M 867

Children are trained early in life. They attend the meetings at which crimes are discussed and punishment meeted out, and learn first hand that undesirable behavior brings undesirable consequences. They are never shielded from the realities and miseries of life, and as a result they are more sophisticated in their social knowledge than youngsters in other countries.

h. Etiquette

N *563 M 576 264 603

According to custom, only the oldest generation may be seated during meals. When the family is entertaining, the family head presides at the meal. His wife does not sit down unless the guests invite her to do so. During family meals, both grandparents sit on the k'ang, and the elder son may sit on the edge